



FARMINGTON VALLEY TRAILS COUNCIL

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Testimony of R. Bruce Donald,

President, Farmington Valley Trails Council
Chairman, Connecticut Greenways Council
CT Committee Chair, East Coast Greenway Alliance

Bruce Donald
President

SB 502 An Act Concerning Bicycle Safety and Transportation Options

Preston Reed
(1916-2013)
Founder

Chairs and Members of the General Assembly Transportation Committee,

The Farmington Valley Trails Council, Inc. (FVTC) is a CT 501(c)(3) formed in 1992. We advocate as well as raise funds for the construction and maintenance of multi-use trails in Connecticut. On behalf of our Board of Directors and over 1,000 members we wish to **affirm our support** for SB 502, An Act Concerning Bicycle Safety and Transportation Options.

Board of Directors
Nancy Weiner-Anstey
Jim Cassidy
Barbara Collins
Mary-Jane Gately
Joy Himmelfarb
Gary Miller
Susan Mitchell
Scott Myrick
Steve Noble
Rich Rowlenon
Al Ryan
Dwight Weed

In my capacities for a number of advocacy organizations in our great state, I know that it has long been felt that Connecticut must haul itself into the current century when it comes to bicycle and pedestrian facilities and safety. Critical to this are the proposed changes to the Statutes contained in this Bill. Another important initiative is to insure that CTDOT incorporates the Complete Streets Statutory Requirements to the Highway Design Manual like ALL of the surrounding states in New England have done. This is not an issue of mistrust ... it is an issue of best business practices.

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Finally, while there has been a welcome loosening of construction and design funding through CTDOT in the last 18 months, nonetheless Connecticut lags seriously behind its sister states in funding bike/ped infrastructures. For most of the last 20 years we have struggled to help our area municipalities to come up with the 20% local match to the federal construction program (TE) funding. Such convolutions have acted to freeze many beneficial projects in a number of communities. Now, when we are so close to finishing the 80-mile Farmington Canal Heritage Trail which bisects our beautiful state, we still have to scratch for crumbs to jump-start the design for Plainville, just to name one project, while many others languish. Collectively, all of these projects constitute a drop in the bucket when compared to the overall transportation budget. Please join us in the effort to bring Connecticut right up to the forefront of bike/ped advocacy and safety in America.

Sincerely,

R. Bruce Donald